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Walla Walla District
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News Release

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Learn about salmon, hydropower, history at McNary speaker series

Umatilla, Ore., -- Got the winter blues and want to get out? Spend an interesting evening at the McNary Dam and learn about culture, science and history.

The "Natural History Speaker Series" will be held Thursday evenings between March and May. The series is co-sponsored by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Blue Mountain Community College.

The presentations are free and will be held at the McNary Dam Theater, located next to the power house, on the Oregon side of the Columbia River near Umatilla. Each session begins at 7 p.m. For information, call Park Ranger Pasquale Anolfo (541) 922-2226 or Margaret Saylor at Blue Mountain Community College (541) 567-1800. Topics currently on the series schedule include:

Mar. 1, The Salmon as a Cultural Resource. Armand Minthorn, a Umatilla tribal religious leader will talk about the cultural significance of treaty resources, which includes salmon and other natural resources.

Mar. 8, Archaeological History of the Whitman Mission. Tina Boehle, National Park Service ranger at the Whitman Mission National Historic Site, will give a presentation on a 1940s archaeological excavation at the mission.

Mar. 15, Rambling the Trails of the Columbia River Gorge. Larry Ross, resident hiker and photographer, will speak about the trails of the Columbia River, trail safety and how to use topographic maps.

Mar. 29, Nectar and Berries for Birds and Butterflies. Known locally as the "Plant Lady of Walla Walla", Diane Ackerman will give a presentation on plants native to the east side of the Cascades that will attract birds and butterflies to your home garden.

Apr. 5, Hydropower. Roy Fox, Bonneville Power Administration Federal Hydropower Manager, will talk about hydropower in the Pacific Northwest.

Apr. 12, Columbia Basin Geology and Planetary Exploration. Stephen Reidel, geologist with Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, will talk about the basalt lava flows in the Columbia Basin and how they are remarkably similar to those observed on the moon and other planets in our solar system.

Apr. 26, The Corps of Discovery on the Columbia River. Don Eppembach, local historian, will talk on the experiences of Lewis and Clark between the mouth of the Snake River and Celilo Falls on the Columbia River.

May 17, The Umatilla Forest of Today. Dave Powell, forest health expert with the U.S. Forest Service and the Umatilla National Forest will offer a presentation on forest vegetation in the Blue Mountains.

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May 24, For the Sake of the Snake River Salmon. Dave Dankel, Public Outreach Coordinator with the Walla Walla District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, will talk about Corps biologists' and engineers' efforts to study and to improve salmon passage at the lower Snake River dams.

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